CONTEMPORARY NATIVE ART OF CANADA - THE WOODLAND INDIANS

ART CONTEMPORAIN DES INDIENS SYLVICOLES DU CANADA

Royal Ontario Museum
Ethnology Department
Toronto, Ontario
Sept. - Dec., 1976

Canada House Gallery, Trafalgar Square
London, England
7th April - 7th May 1976

Aula LuisenSchule, Lahr,
Germany
7 - 21 März 1976

UNDER THE AUSPICES

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Indian
and
Mother
Nature
Norval
Morrisseau

Serpents
Joshim Kakegamic

THE ART OF THE WOODLAND INDIANS

Bernhard Cinader

From the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts and from the Arctic to the southern borders of Canada, there is a wealth of distinctive styles of native traditional art. Some of these have continued within a framework which was established well before first contact with European settlers; they have undergone technological modifications, but have maintained aesthetic continuity. Other traditional activities have fared less well and, losing their ritual or economic base, have been weakened or discontinued. [1, 2] In the last decades, we have witnessed a renaissance of many of the discontinued artistic and craft activities. New works of originality have been contributed by artists who returned to the spirit of the old ways and created a novel visual universe. The art of the West Coast has long been recognized for its major achievements and contemporary Eskimo sculpture has been seen in Europe through major exhibitions. In contrast, the work of the Woodland Indians is hardly known outside the North American continent. Yet, it reflects in a uniquely moving way, an unbroken tradition of religious art among the Iroquois, and an explosive new development of self-assertion by the Algonkian (Ojibwa-Odawa-Cree) school of painters. This exhibition serves to present both aspects of the Woodland Indians' art as a major component of the cultural mosaic of Canada.

Since ancient times, everyday functional objects of the Woodland Indians have been shaped with a keen sense of beauty. [3] Tools, canoes and clothing were decorated; porcupine quills were dyed and applied to hide and birchbark; birchbark was embellished with scraped patterns; the thin layer of outer bark was indented with teeth marks, and wood was carved with a superb sense of design. [1] The objects of the spiritual life were even more lovingly designed. The secrets of the Ojibwa's Medewiwin society were recorded in drawings, often stylized, which transmitted myths and sacred practices from generation to generation. [5, 6] The medicine masks of the Iroquois were a renewed challenge to successive generations to express dream and tradition.

Early contact with settlers introduced new designs and brought trade goods which modified old methods of decoration. Glass beads were used for splendid and gloriously colourful geometric patterns which complemented porcupine quill decorations. Many of the traditional art forms were carried on to the present day, but some fell into disuse. Contemporary descendants of Woodland Indians have continued the work of their forefathers, have revived many of the lost crafts and have taken them far beyond the original traditional limits. This is exemplified by Mohawk pottery, for which material and technique was rediscovered by Oliver and Elda Smith of Hagersville. There, the pottery wheel was, at first, the only western addition to the ancient practice. A second generation of potters is experimenting with designs, which are no longer confined to impressed rope patterns, but interpret and express Iroquois imagery. Among the Ojibwa, Valerie Whettung of the Curved Lake reserve, inspired by nearby ancient rock engravings, [4] uses the designs of those rock engravings on her pottery.

Through contact with the Europeans, silver and silver work was introduced to the Iroquois craftsmen, but by the middle of our century this art had declined and the tradition of craftmanship had almost disappeared. Again, a contemporary generation of craftsmen returned to the roots of tribal design and artists, like Elwood L. Green (p. 13), reached new heights of achievement.

Mixed media, which characterize the mask carvings of the Iroquois, were introduced by Green into silver work. The figured maple bowl with silver turtle and inlaid silver design is a synthesis between the favourite wood of the white settlers and Iroquois design (no. 54 of the exhibited objects).

The medicine masks of the Iroquois are among the works which have been consistently maintained. [7–16] In this exhibition, carvings by Jacob E. Thomas and by some of his sons exemplify the work of two generations of Iroquois carvers.

The visual appeal of traditional art is independent of its context but the aesthetic experience is intensified if the cultural background is understood. Medicine masks should be seen in terms of the encounter between the creator and the headman of the False Face. The creator was finishing his work, inspecting the world and banishing evil from it. He met the giant False Face leader who claimed that he was the maker of the earth. The creator challenged him to a contest: who could move the mountain? The great False Face shook his turtle rattle and summoned the mountain, but the mountain moved only slightly. When the creator gave the command, the mountain obeyed and enormous heat was generated. The great False Face turned his head. His face struck the mountain, he broke his nose, his mouth was distorted by pain (p. 11, l.h.s. top: by Gene Thomas 1973). As the heat of the mountain threatened to suffocate him, he struggled for air and his tongue was drooping (p. 10, l.h.s. top: by Jacob E. Thomas 1974). The creator told the great False Face that he would give him a place in the rocky hills of the west, near the rim of the earth. He assigned him the task to blow sweet gentle air over the crops of the people, to drive disease from the earth and to assist hunters and travellers (p. 9, Jacob E. Thomas 1973 and p. 11, r.h.s. top, a miniature bifunnelate blower mask with rabbit hair by Milton Thomas, 1971).

Masks are destined for movement and should be visualized in movement. A door-keeper mask, created by Jacob E. Thomas in 1966, is shown on p. 10, r.h.s. bottom. A similar mask, also carved by Jacob E. Thomas, is illustrated in "Dance and Song Rituals of Six Nations Reserve". [12] The great doctor of world rim dwellers leads the last part of the False Face Ceremony, the round dance and the hop-kick with sparring. Throughout the ceremony the two maskers of opposite moieties stand by the doors, leaning on staffs. In contrast to the crouching and hopping movements of the Common Faces, Doorkeepers always dance erect. According to G. Prokosch Kurath [12] "the best Canadian doctors have straight, full lips and wrinkled spine on the forehead. Some have broken noses, all have long hair".

A gajesa mask by Jacob E. Thomas (1974), consisting of woven blonde corn husks, is illustrated on p. 10, r.h.s. top. It is a three-dimensional masterpiece of intersecting spheres, cylinders and funnel shaped spaces. The surrounding rays of loose husks increase the impact of the tight organization of the central space. A steatite version of this type of mask by Jacob F. Thomas, Junior (1973), is shown on p. 11, l.h.s. bottom. The husk faces were a race of farmers who lived in a ravine on the other side of the earth, tilling their fields amidst high stumps. They visit the long house during two nights of the midwinter festival as messengers of the three sisters: corn, squash and beans.

In the last decade, a new sculptural medium, brown steatite, has been introduced by Duffy Wilson, a Tuscarora, and in his masterful hands, it has been used to tell us of the history and legends of the Iroquois Federation. Young artists in Oshweken have used this new medium to advantage.

P.11 r.h.s. bottom by Jacob F. Thomas, Junior (1972), is a fine example of this type. "Early in the history of the world, a False Face roamed on the island, supported on the back of the great turtle swimming in the primordial sea. When he lost a great contest of power with our creator, he begged to be permitted to help mankind in times of illness. Today, he lives at the edge of the world, shaking his turtle rattle, ever ready to help when we are ill".

"Handsome Lake and the Corn Spirit", No. 45 of the exhibited sculptures (not illustrated), by Jacob F. Thomas, Jr., relates to the latest phase in the development of Iroquois religion. In 1799, the Seneca Handsome Lake experienced the first of several visions [17] which form the good message (gi'weyo). One of these visions occurred when Handsome Lake passed through a corn field and encountered the female corn spirit who told him that she would go with him to the realm of the spirits when his life on earth was over. He begged her not to leave this earth and corn spirit agreed and to this day continues to look after the children of women. The visions of Handsome Lake are annually recited to the people.

In the 1960's an entirely new artisitic development occurred in Northern Ontario. Norval Morrisseau, born at Fort Williams, began to paint the legends of his people, first using black ink on brown paper and depicting the spirits and their interaction with man. Later, the subject widened into images which dealt not only with myths but also with his view of the prehistory of the Indians, the relation between man and fellow man, the place of man in nature and his feelings about many aspects of life. As the content of his paintings diversified, the use of colour became freer and a more important component of his composition. In the earliest works, tones of brown and green were used; later colours became bold and remind us of stained glass windows through which light flows or of brilliantly coloured glass bead designs. The first attempts of Morrisseau to paint the sacred legends of his people were fiercely resisted by those who guarded the secrets of the Medewiwin society, but Morrisseau persisted and as he developed his own capacity as a painter, the opposition to his work gradually declined. His influence on other native artists soon made itself felt. Carl Ray, who had originally been discouraged by the hostility which his drawings evoked among the leaders of his band at Sandy Lake, returned to his creative work and began to draw and paint his version of legends and of life. Carl Ray developed into the most accomplished of Ontario's native graphic artists. Others of the same generation painted with strong awareness of European schools of painting. Daphne Odjig Beavon had sketched as a child, had been imbued by her grandfather with the traditions of her people, had travelled abroad and had finally synthesized a style and an approach which straddle two worlds and left her equally at home in both. Further south, at Rama, Arthur Shilling had started to master impressionistic techniques of portraiture, had spent a short time at the Ontario College of Art, and depicted the faces of his people. Shilling's painting is Indian because he is Indian and deeply feels for his people, but his technique is Western.

The work of Morrisseau, Ray and others, began to exercise its influence all over Northern Ontario. Young artists were inspired by the boldness with which the spiritual Indian heritage was set down. They began to find their own way and their own development within this framework. Jackson Beardy from Garden Hill Reserve, Saul Williams of Round Lake, Roy Thomas of Long Lac, Joshim Kakegamic and Goyce Kakegamic of Red Lake, Sam Ash of Pickle Lake, and Johnson Meekis from Sandy Lake were among those who developed their own creative personality and their own individualistic style. As their work progressed, a distinctive school of Cree-Ojibwa-Odawa painting became discernable. Further south, Manitoulin Island had been the birthplace of Daphne Odjig Beavon and Francis Kagige. Kagige influenced a younger generation with lovingly observed and stylized representations of birds and animals.

In the early 1970's, a Manitoulin group of young painters, still in high school, began to express themselves in drawings and paintings. Their artistic activities were a facet of their growing interest in the heritage of their people and were one aspect of self-discovery and of a determination to preserve the essence of their Indian heritage and to recapture

(continued on next page)

customs and rites which had nearly been forgotten. Foremost among them were Blake Debassige and Martin Panamick. The former working with bold, broad and visionary shapes, the latter with precise draughtsmanship and a love of nature which sometimes results in realistic and sometimes in gracefully stylized depictions of birds. James Simon is painting in a mode which blends dream and reality and invents a new imagery of animals and spirits. These three often paint together and with Randolph Trudeau and John Laford form a group which bodes well for the future of Ontario native painting.

In parallel with the growth of the Cree-Ojibwa-Odawa school, there developed a group of painters whose art blended modern western artistic discoveries with Indian heritage. Daphne Odjig Beavon and Arthur Shilling are two of those artists; Alex Janvier invents imaginary maps of pure colour which are graceful abstractions and Clifford Maracle has used the techniques of the fauves to tell us what it is like to be an Indian in the technological world of the 20th century.

Legends of the Algonkian Indians have been recorded in books illustrated by painters. [18-24] The "Fish-tailed Woman with Four Serpents" by N. Morrisseau (p. 14), "Watergod-Misshipeshu" by Roy Thomas (p. 21), "Partridge Woman" by J. Simon, (p. 19), "Serpents" by Joshim Kagegamic (p. 3) and the "Devil Woman" by B. Debassige (inside back cover) show some of the figures which populate the universe of myths and imagination. The poetry of the stories which inspire paintings of this type can be exemplified by the story of the "Thunder Bird Man" by D. Odjig Beavon (p. 18), and "Nanabush Changes the Evil Spirits into Lizards" by F. Kagige (p. 22). The Thunder Bird Man was a young Indian who courted the Thunder Bird Woman when he encountered her in human form. A jealous older brother shot her with an arrow. Torn with grief, her lover wandered through the woods.Nanabozho advised him to go to a tall mountain that reached into the clouds and there the lovers met again. Thunder Bird Woman was now part thunder bird and part woman. The young man followed her into the clouds, but he could not live on the food which was there available. Finally, she said, "If you wish to stay with me you must come to see the Chief of the thunderbirds who will change your body as ours", and the young Indian followed her and was transformed. From that time they ate worms and they lived happily ever after. Kagige's Nanabush was a giant of a man, a friend of the Westwind and a protector of the native people. Once he saw evil spirits "I work for good, you work for evil" he said "race me to the edge of the lake. If you catch me before I reach the shore, then the evil spirit will be master". Nanabush raced to the lake; as he reached the shore, he changed into a swan and swam into the lake. The evil spirits ran so fast, they could not stop at the water's edge, fell into the lake and hit their heads on the rocks. Nanabush let them sink, but he did not let them die. He changed them into lizards; they would only be allowed to come on land, when everyone was asleep.

A second type of paintings, such as "Flying Geese" by F. Kagige, "Diving Beaver" by J. Meekis (p. 15), "Merganser Fishing at Night" by Saul Williams, (p. 23), "Swimming Otter" by R. Trudeau and "Spring Awakening" by Carl Ray (p. 32), celebrate the beauty and grace of animals. Other works are devoted to the kinship between man and animal, particularly the bear (Carl Ray's "Medicine Bear", p. 20), eagle (Martin Panamick's "Spirit of the Eagle") and wild goose (Jackson Beardy's "Bird Spirit II"). A third type of painting expresses the Indian view and experience of the world. In a masterful drawing, Joshim Kakegamic projects his perception of the awesome shaking tent ritual of divination, supplication and spirit communication (p. 29). Morrisseau addresses himself again and again to his concept of the interrelation between man and nature. In his painting "The Indian and Mother Nature" (p. 2), areas of earthy-brown and deep pine green show the fields and the forests of Northern Ontario and a rainbow encircles the face of an Indian who drinks from the breast of Nature. The "Horse Warrior" by B. Debassige refers to the same theme but sharpens it into an expression of the conflict between the way of life of the Indian and of the white man. "New people came to the land from far away. They brought new beliefs and thinking to the land. They wanted the land, water and sky and all the creatures for themselves. They didn't understand the "oneness" of things. These new people brought strange creatures that could carry a man to battle or to hunt. Anishnawbe and these creatures could think together and work together, in harmony. They tried to protect their life and land. Sometimes they won...and...sometimes...they lost." In paintings like these, and in intensely personal statements such as "Loneliness and Desire" by Samuel Ash (p. 30) and "Self Portrait" by A. Shilling (p. 31), a door is being opened on a visual universe and on a cultural confrontation. Artists, identifying themselves to us, also make us see ourselves with a new vision of our own identity. Before us are images which fuse dream and reality and which interweave surface appearances with the observer's knowledge of internal structure.

In the last few years the importance of the Algonkian School to Canadian contemporary art has been recognized in the country of its origin. [25,26] This show is a declaration of the creative vitality of the Woodland Indians. It is also a stocktaking of a rapidly unfolding creative movement and a statement of its worth as part of the world's cultural mosaic.

Une porte s'ouvre sur un univers visuel et une confrontation culturelle dans lesquels les artistes, en s'identifiant à nous, nous permettent d'avoir une nouvelle vision de nous-mêmes et de notre propre identité. Nous avons devant nous une imagerie qui mélange le rêve et la réalité et entrelace les apparences de l'extérieur et ce que le spectateur connait de la structure interne. Cet art se différrencie par la façon dont il est conçu et également par la façon dont la palette y est utilisée: les couleurs semblent être les teintes de la terre nue ou semblent vibrer avec l'éclat impitoyable des vitreaux illuminés par le soleil. Nous pénétrons dans un monde où rêve, cauchemar, observation et mémoire collective concourent à exprimer que les artistes ont redécouvert la valeur de la conception traditionnelle et mythologique du monde et proclament fièrement leur propre identité. Il ne s'agit pas d'un soliloque mais plutôt d'un moyen de communiquer avec un monde extérieur devenu inhospitalier et qu'affronte maintenant une volonté artistique.

Dans les oeuvres, on trouve deux éléments distincts: la composante Cree-Outaouais-Ojibway (Algonquins) est due à une condition sociale beaucoup plus fragmentée et désespérée et à un univers religieux beaucoup moins uni et structuré que ceux des Iroquois. Les peintres Ojibway, les Cree et Outaouais s'inspirent beaucoup moins des exemples esthétiques que les sculpteurs Iroquois dont les oeuvres reposent sur l'iconographie des anciennes sculptures religieuses. Les deux groupes font revivre leur patrimoine traditionnel de religion, de mythes et de légendes, mais les peintres nord-ontariens accordent davantage de place à la libre expression que les sculpteurs Iroquois.

Bien que traditionnelles par leur source d'inspiration, les sculptures et les peintures sont révolutionnaires par tout ce qu'elles révèlent. Ces principales révélations sur les mythes Ojibway ont eu lieu il y a quelques années, au cours de batailles menées par Morrisseau et continuées par Ray. Pour la plus jeune génération, ces batailles appartiennent au passé et c'est peut'être ce qui rend sa peinture moins intense et plus sûre d'elle.

Dans de nombreuses oeuvres, le dialogue est parfois difficile car des efforts sont faits soit pour s'opposer à la mythologie judéo-chrétienne environnante soit pour l'intégrer. L'acuité de la tension émotionnelle qui en résulte varie non seulement d'un artiste à l'autre mais également d'un groupe à l'autre. Les peintures des Algonquins sont plus tourmentées, plut titanesques que les sculputeres-collages de Iroquois qui sont plus assurées et proviennent d'un peuple que est toujours plus ou moins parvenu à maintenir une certaine continuité.

Les jeunes artistes Ojibway expérimentent de nouveaux moyens et de nouvelles techniques de peinture tandis que les jeunes sculpteurs Iroquois les expérimentent dans la sculpture sur pierre. Chaque groupe a des éléments uniques et des éléments communs de tradition esthétique; mais qu'ils retournent aux anciennes couleurs et compositions au moyen de piquants de porc-épic et de perles de verre ou qu'ils redécouvrent les sculptures traditionnelles de faux masques en bois, ils les interprètent avec de nouvelles techniques et de nouvelles conceptions.

Les racines artistiques traditionnelles de Iroquois se manifestent par l'existence de familles d'artistes, comme celle de Jacob Thomas et de ses fils, qui ont sû conserver et développer les thèmes, l'ampleur et l'inspiration de la sculpture iroquoise.

L'art indien devient un mouvement de plus en plus cohérent: ceci se traduit par la propagation au sein de cet art d'une découverte esthétique et technique. On en trouve un exemple dans la brillante école de l'Ile Manitoulin qui compte des jeunes peintres talentueux, d'une vingtaine d'année et sachant communiquer entre eux. Le fait que les artistes de Oshweken adoptent de plus en plus pour leur sculpture la stéatite brune que Duffy Wilson a trouvée en Caroline du Nord, ancienne région occupée par les Tuscarora, en est une autre illustration.

A la myriade de conceptions s'ajoute le fait que des peintres aussi mûrs que Daphne Odjig, Alex Janvier et Arthur Shilling connaissent à fond les perspectives artistiques occidentales et y ont recours, que les travailleurs de l'argent, en particulier Elwood Green, ont une parfaite maîtrise de leur art et que les potiers Mohawk et Ojibway ont redécouvert les anciennes techniques et les anciens symboles.

Cette exposition révèle l'importance de l'art des autochtones; elle permet également de faire l'inventaire d'un mouvement créatif qui évolue rapidement et de faire comprendre sa valeur au sein de la mosaïque culturelle du Canada.

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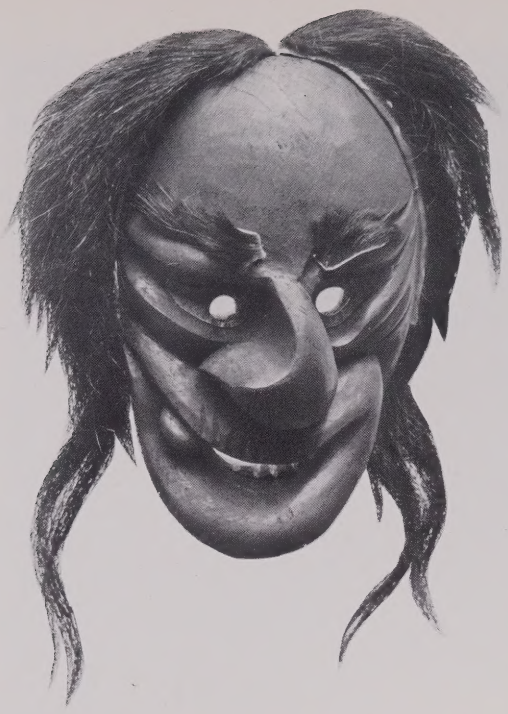
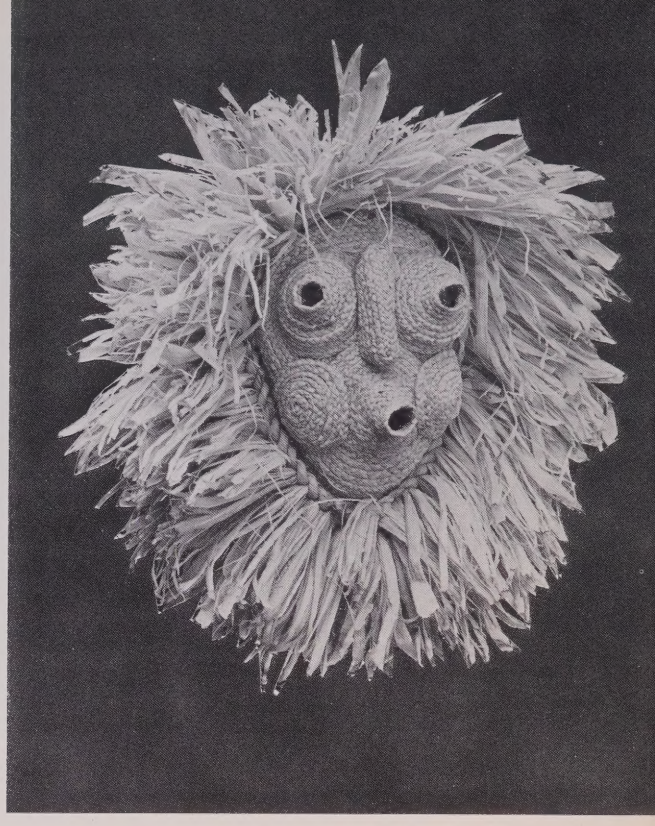
Blower Mask
Jacob E. Thomas

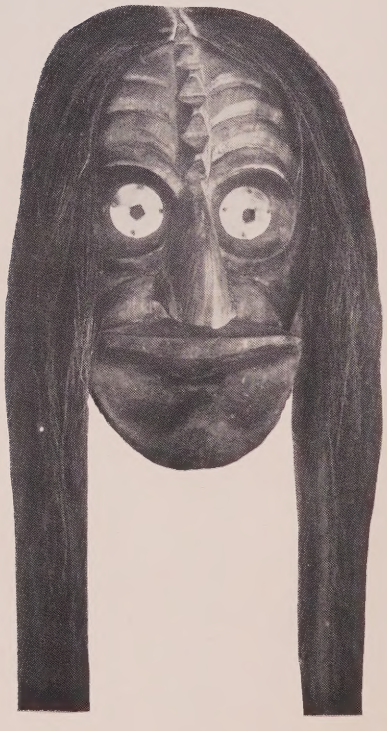


Broken Nose Mask
Jacob E. Thomas



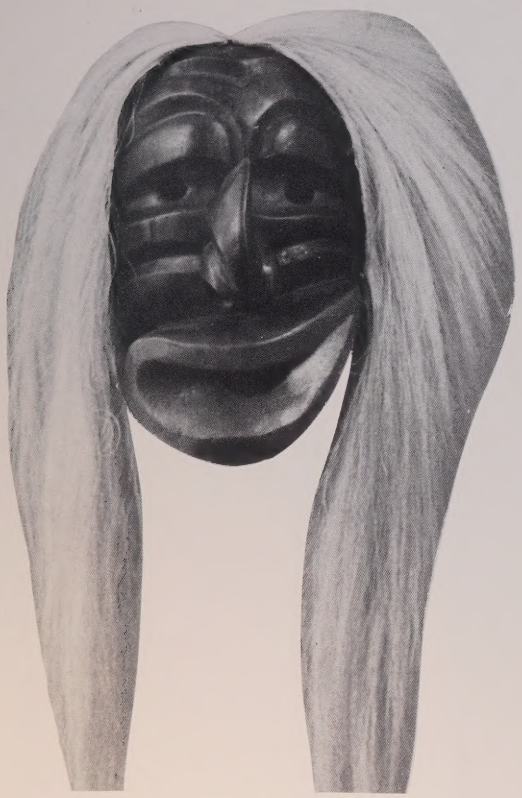
Gajesa Mask
Jacob E. Thomas

Old Man Mask
Jacob E. Thomas



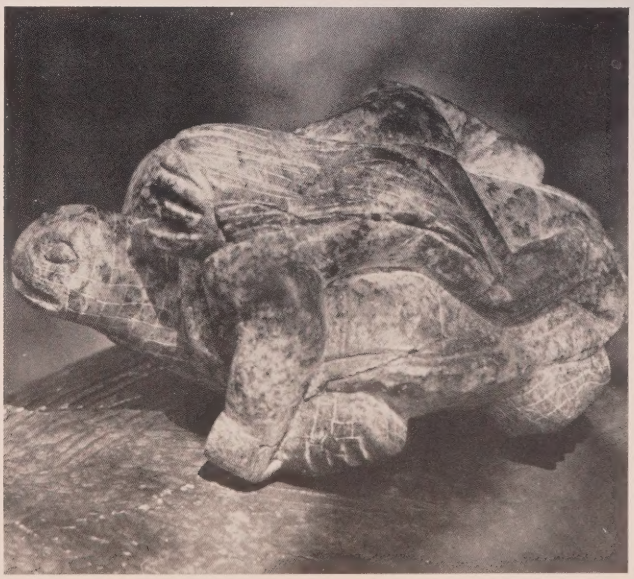
Doorkeeper Mask
Jacob E. Thomas

Broken Nose Mask
Gene Thomas



Miniature Mask
Milton Thomas

Gajesa Face (Steatite)
Jacob F. Thomas Jr.

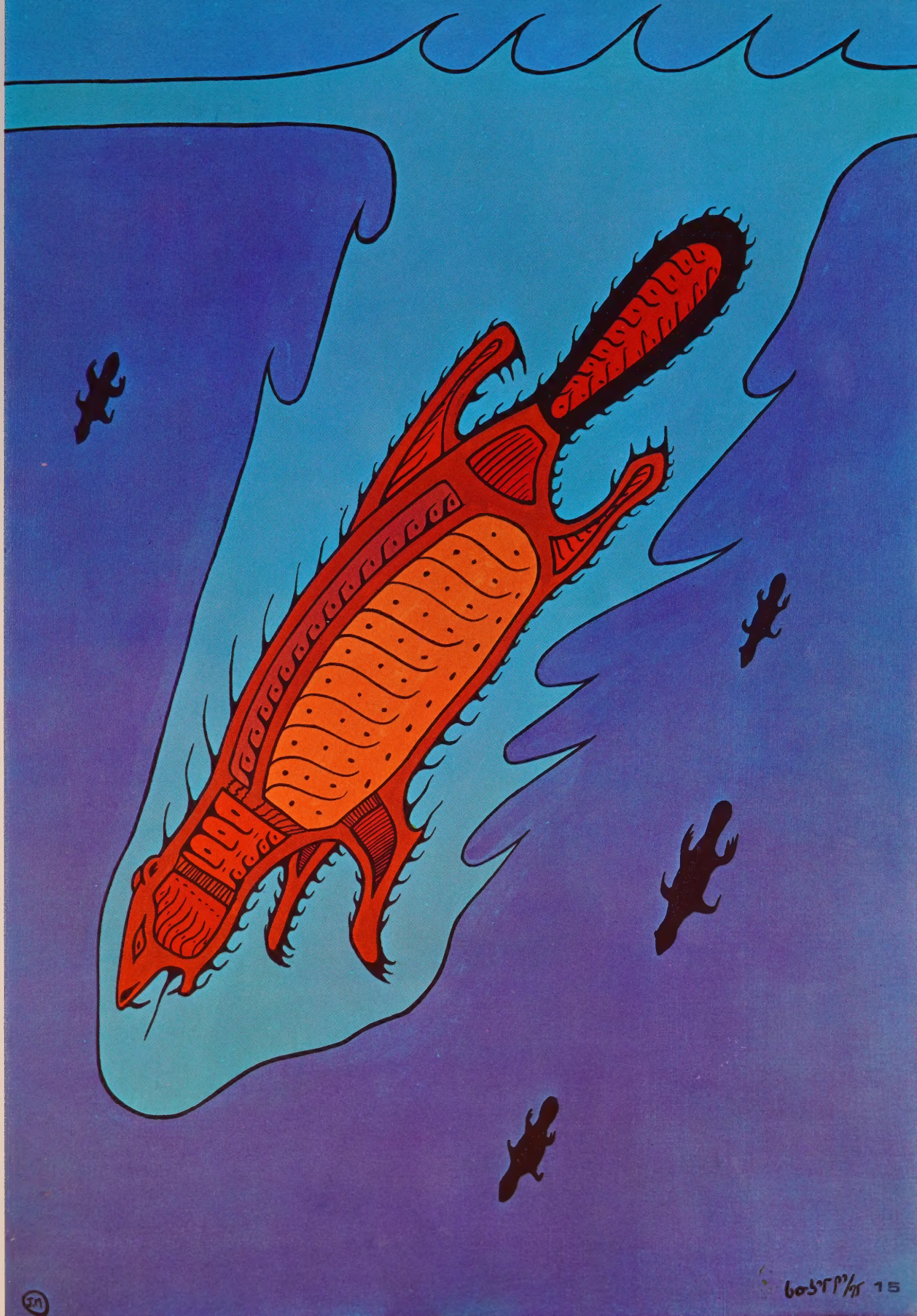


False Face on Turtle (Steatite)
Jacob F. Thomas Jr.

Tree Trunk
with
two
roughed
out
False Faces
Jacob E. Thomas

Silver Eagle
Elwood Green

Fishtailed Woman with Four Serpents
Norval Morrisseau



Beaver
Diving
Johnson
Meekis

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(Cinader collection)

Jackson BEARDY

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(Cinader collection)

Blake DEBASSIGE

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4 Blue Jay That Stole Winter (1974)
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Goyce KAKEGAMIC

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(Cinader collection)

Norval MORRISSEAU

13 Thunderbird Blessing The Shaman (1974)
(Band collection)

14 Indian And Mother Nature (1970)
(Cinader collection)

15 Fishtailed Woman With Four Serpents (1972)
(Cinader collection)

16 The Moonchild (1973)
(Band collection)

17 Adam And Eve And The Serpent (1974)
(Band collection)

18 Warrior With Thunderbirds (1973)
(Band collection)

Daphne ODJIG

19 Off To The Pow-Wow (1973)
(Band Collection)

20 Thunderbird Man (1973)
(Cinader collection)

21 Three Eagles (1975)
(Cinader collection)

Martin PANAMICK

22 Spirit Of The Eagle (1975)
(Cinader collection)

23 The Eagle (1974)
(Cinader collection)

Carl RAY

24 Layers Of Sleep (1972)
(Lewin collection)

25 Snake (1973)
(Lewin collection)

26 Medicine Bear (1972)
(Cinader collection)

27 Spring Awakening (1975)
(Lewin collection)

Arthur SHILLING

28 Self Portrait (1972)
(Cinader collection)

James SIMON

29 Partridge Woman (1975)
(Cinader collection)

Roy THOMAS

30 Loon Island (1975)
(Cinader collection)

31 Totem - Water God - Misshipeshu (1965)
(Cinader collection)

Randy TRUDEAU

32 Otter Swimming (1975)
(Cinader collection)

Saul WILLIAMS

33 Merganser Fishing At Night (1972)
(Cinader collection)

34 Man Turning Into Caribou (1971)
(Cinader collection)

SCULPTURES

Gene THOMAS

35 Crooked Mouth Mask (1973)
(Cinader collection)

Jacob E. THOMAS

36 Tree Trunk With Roughed Out Faces (1948)
(Cinader collection)

37 Councillor Mask (1971)
(Cinader collection)

38 Whistling Mouth Mask (1973)
(Cinader collection)

39 Protruding Tongue Mask (1974)
(Cinader collection)

40 Gajesa Mask (1974)
(Cinader collection)

41 Old Man Medicine Mask (1964)
(Cinader collection)

42 Doorkeeper Mask (1966)
(Cinader collection)

Jacob F. THOMAS Jr.

43 Gajesa Mask - steatite (1973)
(Cinader collection)

44 Man On Turtle - steatite (1972)
(Cinader collection)

45 Handsome Lake And Corn Spirit - steatite (1974)
(Cinader collection)

Milton THOMAS

46 Miniature Bifunnelate Blower Mask (1971)
(Cinader collection)

POTTERY

Elda SMITH

47 Vase with impressed rope pattern (1967)
(Cinader collection)

Sara SMITH

48 Thunderbird Vase (1975)
(Cinader collection)

Valeria WHETTUNG

49 Vase with Petroglyph Design (1973)
(Cinader collection)

PORCUPINE QUILL BOXES

Delia BEBONING

50 Turtle design (1972)
(Cinader collection)

Dolly IRONS

51 Abstract pattern (1973)
(Cinader collection)

ST. GERMAINE

52 Flower design (1968)
(Cinader collection)

Irene WILLIAMS

53 Beaver design (1973)
(Band collection)

SILVERWORK

Elwood GREEN

54 Turtle Bowl - figured maple and silver (1975)
(Cinader collection)

55 Eagle Pendant (1971)
(Cinader collection)

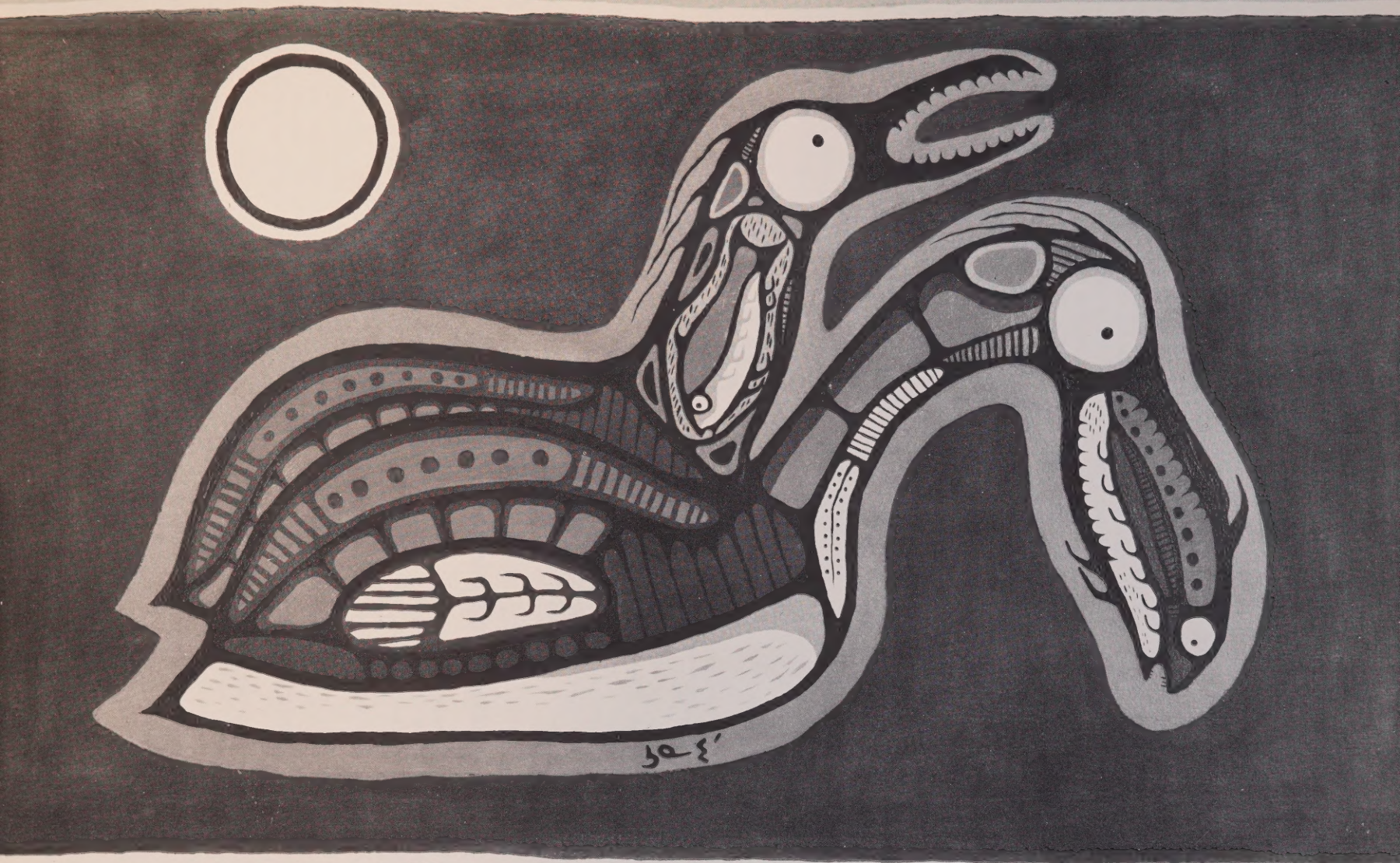
Thunderbird Man
Daphne Odjig

Partridge Woman
James Simon

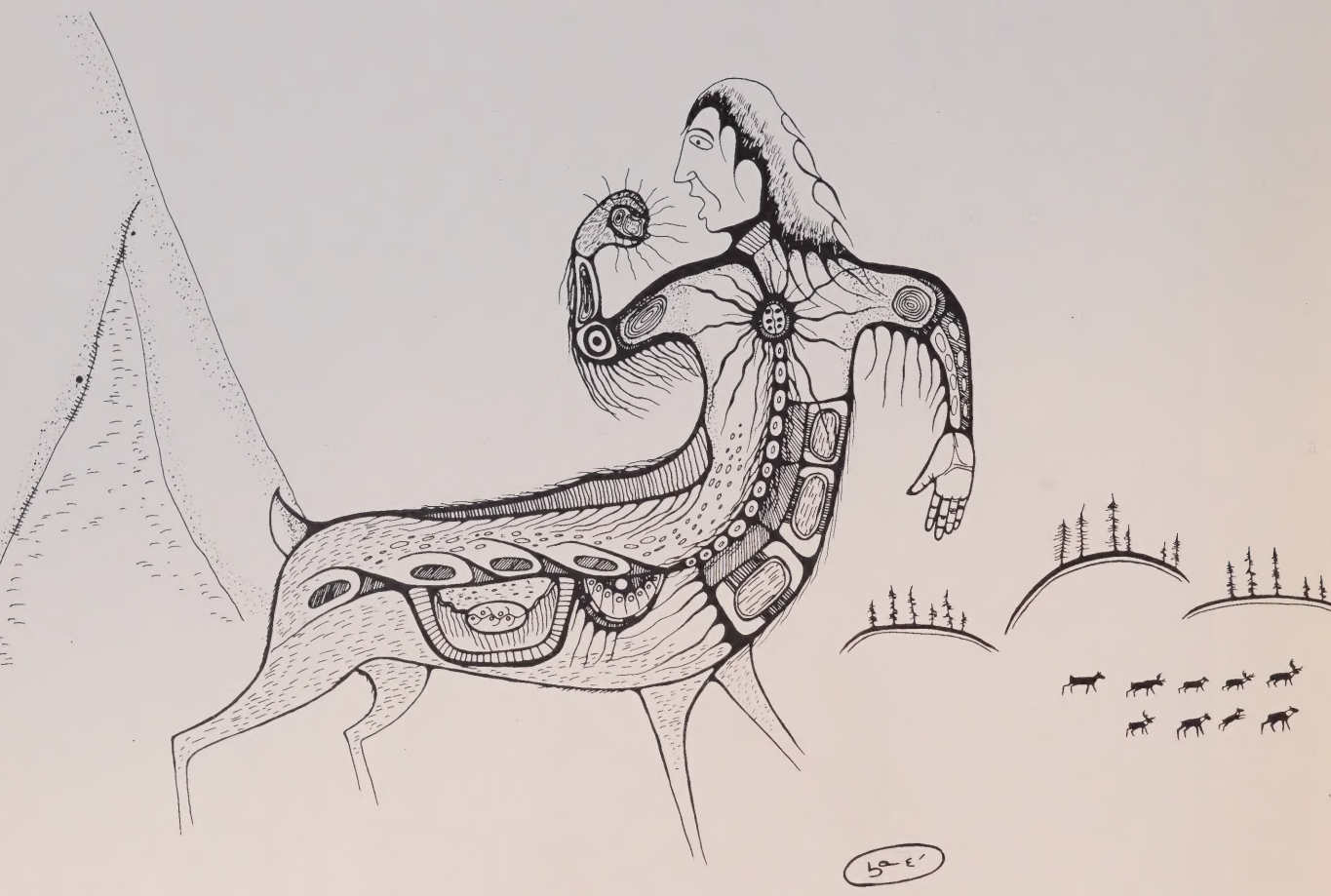
Medicine Bear
Carl Ray

Watergod - Misshipeshu
Roy Thomas

Nanabush Changing the Evil Spirits into Lizards
Francis Kagige



Merganser Fishing
Saul Williams



Man turning into Caribou
Saul Williams

BIOGRAPHIES

The initiation of the contemporary Algonkian School of Painting and of the Iroquois artistic renaissance goes back to the sixties. The public recognition of these movements began in the early seventies with exhibitions at the Oakville Centennial Gallery (Ref. 25) and at the Royal Ontario Museum; the former based on private collections and confined to Woodland Indians, the latter acquired by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs - embraced all modern Canadian native art and is now deposited at the Museum of Man in Ottawa. In 1975, the first permanent exhibition of contemporary Woodland Indian painting and sculpture in a public art gallery was opened at the McMichael Canadian Collection at Kleinburg (Ref. 26). The youth of the group of artists, assembled in the present exhibition (average age: 29 years, standard deviation of average age: 9.5 years), marks it as a movement of flux not only aesthetically, but also in the entrance of new artists and in style diffusion between groups which already show some coherence. In fact, there are many artists who would be included in this exhibition were there no space limitation; some of these can only be mentioned here by name. Among them are important Iroquois carvers such as Joe Jacobs and Duffy Wilson; Iroquois painters such as Alec Bomberry, Tom Hill, Gary Miller, William Powless and Algonkian painters, such as Del Ashkewe, Lloyd Caibaiosai, Benjamin Chee Chee, Eddy Cobiness, Noel Ducharme, Sylvia Horse, John Eric Laford, Wilma Simon, Isidore Wadow, Leo Yerxa and Waine Yerxa. Finally there are native painters who, though not belonging to the group of Woodland Artists, may have considerable influence on the future development of this group and on all Canadian Art. Foremost among them is Alex Janvier of Alberta, a Chipewyan, whose elegant and sophisticated imaginary maps and representations of man and animal break new ground. Sarain Stump, a Cree-Shoshone, of Alberta and Saskatchewan, who tragically died in his middle thirties, has found evocative ways of expressing in poetry ("There is My People Sleeping", Grey, British Columbia 1970, paperback 1974), painting and collage sculpture, the feeling of being Indian. His work has spoken to and for native people all over Canada. Finally, Allan Sapp, a Plains' Cree, has created a record of memories of Life in a Saskatchewan reserve which have validity for all who wish to share experiences which are separate and yet universal.

Short biographies of some of the artists, represented in this exhibition, are given below; reference numbers are listed on page 8 of this catalogue.

SAMUEL ASH

Born: 1951, Sioux Lookout, Ontario. His mother died at his birth. He grew up at Pickle Lake in the home of foster parents. Attended school for deaf in Belleville until 1970. Lived in Thunder Bay since 1971 and in British Columbia since 1975.

JACKSON BEARDY

Born: 1944, Garden Hill Reserve, Island Lake Manitoba. Cree. Attended residential school at Portage La Prairie, then technical vocational school and School of Fine Arts (University of Manitoba) at Winnipeg. Work at Expo. Illustrated "When the Morning Stars Sang Together" (Ref: 22). Exhibitions at Winnipeg Art Gallery ("Treaty Numbers 23, 287, 1171 - Three Indian Painters of the Prairies" 1972) and Commercial Galleries in Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal and Ottawa. Member of his Band Council and of the Board of Directors of Manitoba Arts Council.

BLAKE DEBASSIGE

Born: 1956, Manitoulin Island, Ontario. Ojibwa. Residence: West Bay Reserve, Manitoulin Island, Ontario. Attended West Bay Composite School, Manitou Arts Foundation, Schreiber Island Program (summer 1972), Laurentian University 1975. Commissions: two mural paintings for Little Current Arena, eight bas-relief carvings for entrance gateway to Chinguacousy Centennial Park, Bramalea Park, Bramalea, Ontario. Exhibitions: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (1973), Chinguacousy Public Library and Art Gallery (1973), Samuel J. Zacks Gallery, Stong College, York University (1973). Visiting artist for Manitou Arts Foundation 1973. Design consultant for Ojibwe Cultural Foundation of Manitoulin Island.

ELWOOD L. GREEN

Born: 1936, Grand River Reserve, Mohawk. Self taught craftsman. Work displayed at and purchased by historical and art museums: Everson Museum of Art, American Indian Art Hall of Fame, etc. His work is based on Iroquois religion and artistic traditions.

FRANCIS KAGIGE

Born: 1929, Wikwemikong Reserve, Manitoulin Island, Ontario. Odawa. Exhibited at International Institute (1964), Toronto Central Library (1964), Japanese Cultural Centre (1964), Art Gallery of the University of Windsor (1966), and Indian Pavillion, Expo '67 (1967). Illustrated "Tales of Nokomis" (Ref: 19) and "I am an Indian" (Ref: 23).

(continued on next page)

GOYCE KAKEGAMIC

Born: 1948, Sandy Lake, Ontario. Cree. Attended elementary and high school at Dryden Lake. Worked in mines at Red Lake, then studied at Federation College, Thunder Bay and University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario. Has worked as high school counsellor at Sioux Lookout and for the Ontario Government's Economic Development Programme (North Western Ontario) of the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation.

JOSHIM KAKEGAMIC

Born: 1953, Sandy Lake Reserve, Ontario. Cree. Brother of Goyce and brother-in-law of Morrisseau. Attended residential school in Niagara region. Painted with Carl Ray and Norval Morrisseau; in 1973 set up, at Red Lake, with brothers, a studio for the production of large screen prints. Since 1974 he has had annual exhibitions jointly with Goyce.

CLIFFORD MARACLE

Born: 1944, Tyendinapa Reserve, near Deseronto, Ontario. Mohawk. Graduated from Ontario College of Art, Toronto. He now lives in Toronto and devotes his time to painting and sculpture. The style of the U.S.A. Indian artist, Fritz Shoulder, has been one of the formative elements of his artistic development.

JOHNSON MEEKIS

Born: 1954, at Red Lake and lived at Sandy Lake. Cree. Started to paint in 1972, influenced by Carl Ray. He is currently a second year student at Lakehead University (Thunder Bay), taking courses in teacher education.

NORVAL MORRISSEAU

Born: 1932, Fort William, Ontario. He saw little of his father; his mother died when she was 52; his warmest and most tender relationship was with his maternal grandfather, Moses Nanakonagas, whose wisdom, kindness and gentle humour were a major formative influence. When he left school, unemployment, starvation and finally tuberculosis were his fate. His first adequately paid regular job was in the Cochenour gold mine. In his late teens, he started to paint legendary subjects and met with the disapproval of friends and relatives who felt that he was breaking tribal taboos. Josef Weinstein, the medical officer at Cochenour, a collector of primitive art and amateur painter, gave him the first real encouragement on the road to becoming one of Canada's most original and brilliant artists and the trailblazer of a school of northern Ontario artists. Documentaries of the National Filmboard "Canadian Indian Canvas" and "Pride of Colour" deals with his work and that of Janvier, Odjig, Sapp and Shilling. Numerous exhibitions. Work in public collections.

DAPHNE ODJIG BEAVON

Born: 1925, Wikwemikong Reserve, Manitoulin Island, Ontario. Work contained in public and private collections. Several one man shows. Illustrated "Tales From the Smoke House" (Ref: 27), cover design of "Indians Without Tipis", William Clare (Manitoba) Ltd., Vancouver, Winnipeg 1973, wrote and illustrated series of booklets on the Nanabush legends (Ginn and Co., Toronto), and has travelled and painted in Europe. Contributor: "Treaty numbers 23, 287, 1171" (Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1972), her work contained in Canadian Pavilion Expo '70, Osaka, Japan, several public collections. Documentary of the National Film Board of Canada deals with her work.

MARTIN PANAMICK

Born: 1956, West Bay Reserve, Manitoulin Island. Has painted since 1972 and has designed the Eagle symbol which identifies the crafts sold by the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation of Manitoulin Island (see p. 28).

CARL RAY

Born: 1943, Sandy Lake Reserve, Ontario. Cree. Grandson of medicine man. Worked as trapper, commercial fisherman and miner. Self taught professional artist. Taught at the Manitou Arts Foundation (summer, 1971). Edits Sandy Lake Reserve newspaper "Kitwin". Illustrated "Sacred Legends of the Sandy Cree" (Ref: 20). One man shows: Confederation College (1970), Minnesota State College (1971), Commercial galleries in Toronto, Winnipeg, Montreal and Ottawa.

ARTHUR SHILLING

Born: 1941, Rama Reserve, near Orillia, Ontario. Ojibwa. Attended residential School in Brantford, Royal College of Art. Celebrates the beauty of his people with expressionistic portraits in oil or pastel. Between 1970-75, spent much of his time in Toronto, now lives on Rama Reserve. Exhibitions in Commercial and Public galleries.

JAMES SIMON

Born: 1954, Wikwemikong Reserve, Manitoulin Island, Ontario. Ojibwa. Started painting at the Indian Art Club of Manitoulin Secondary School. Teaching Assistant in reserve schools, summer courses in Laurentian University. Has illustrated classroom material for an Ojibwa language kindergarten.

ELDA SMITH

Born: 1919, Hagersville, Ontario, Mohawk. Initially made beaded bags, leather jackets and jockey silks. Became involved in pottery as an alternative craft after an illness in 1961. Work based on ancient Iroquois designs. Founded "Mohawk Pottery" with husband Oliver. Each of 12 potters signs work with initials; Mrs. Elda Smith uses E.M.S.

SARA SMITH

Born: 1940, Hagersville. Mohawk, daughter of Elda and Oliver Smith. Imaginative potter, now working independently.

GENE THOMAS

Born: 1960, Grand River Reserve, Ontario. Onandago, son of Jacob E. Thomas. One of his carvings is in the collection of the Museum of the Mohawk Institute at Brantford.

JACOB E. THOMAS

Born: 1922, Grand River Reserve. Cayuga. Father, David Thomas, most formative influence. Follows the traditional designs of Iroquois carvers. His work has been exhibited in the Oakville Centennial Gallery, Royal Ontario Museum, the Samuel J. Zacks Gallery of York University (Ontario), the Gallery of the Historical Society, Buffalo, New York, the Gallery of the State College, New Paltz, N.Y., etc. Several films deal with his work: "Carvings", Dueck Films, Winnipeg, Man., produced by Diand, Ottawa; "My hands are the tools of my soul", Swann films, New York, N.Y., and "Gannonsio nni: the League" jointly produced by the National Museum of Manitoba and the National Film Board of Canada. He has participated in three recordings of Iroquois songs (Album 1, 2, 3; Iroqrafts, R.R. #2, Oshweken, Ont.).

JACOB F. THOMAS, JUNIOR

Born: 1945, Grand River Reserve, Ontario. Onondago, son of Jacob E. Thomas. Residence: Grand River Reserve, Ontario. Gifted sculptor in wood and steatite.

MILTON THOMAS

Born: 1953, Grand River Reserve, Ontario. Onandago, son of Jacob E. Thomas. Died in June 1974 after a car accident in May of the same year. Sculptor in wood and steatite.

ROY THOMAS

Born: 1949, Caramat, Thunder Bay, Ontario. Ojibwa. Member of the Longlac band. Attended Indian Department School at Longlac, Ontario and St. Joseph's Boarding School at Thunder Bay, Ontario. Paintings influenced by Norval Morrisseau.

RANDY TRUDEAU

Born: 1954, Wikwemikong Reserve, Manitoulin Island. In 1973, he participated in Manitou Art Foundation Schreiber Island Project, participated in Opportunity for Youth project in senior citizen's home, considers paintings of Lloyd Caibaiosai as important formative influence.

SAUL WILLIAMS

Born: 1955, Ojibwa. Three weeks formal art training at Elliot Lake (1971), summer 1972 Schreiber Island Project. Exhibited at Glenhurst Gallery, York University, Guelph University, Canadian National Exhibition, and Mariposa Festival.

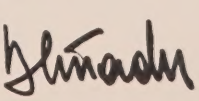
VALERIE WHETTUNG

Born: Curved Lake Reserve. Peterborough Teacher's College Certificate (1967). Taught public school (Indian School, Big Trout Lake). Studied ceramics, Banff School of Fine Arts. Attended Trent University (graduated 1973). Pottery decorations inspired by the Peterborough Petroglyphs.

IRENE WILLIAMS

Born: 1931, Moose Deer Reserve, King Bay, Ontario. Learned porcupine quill work from her mother.

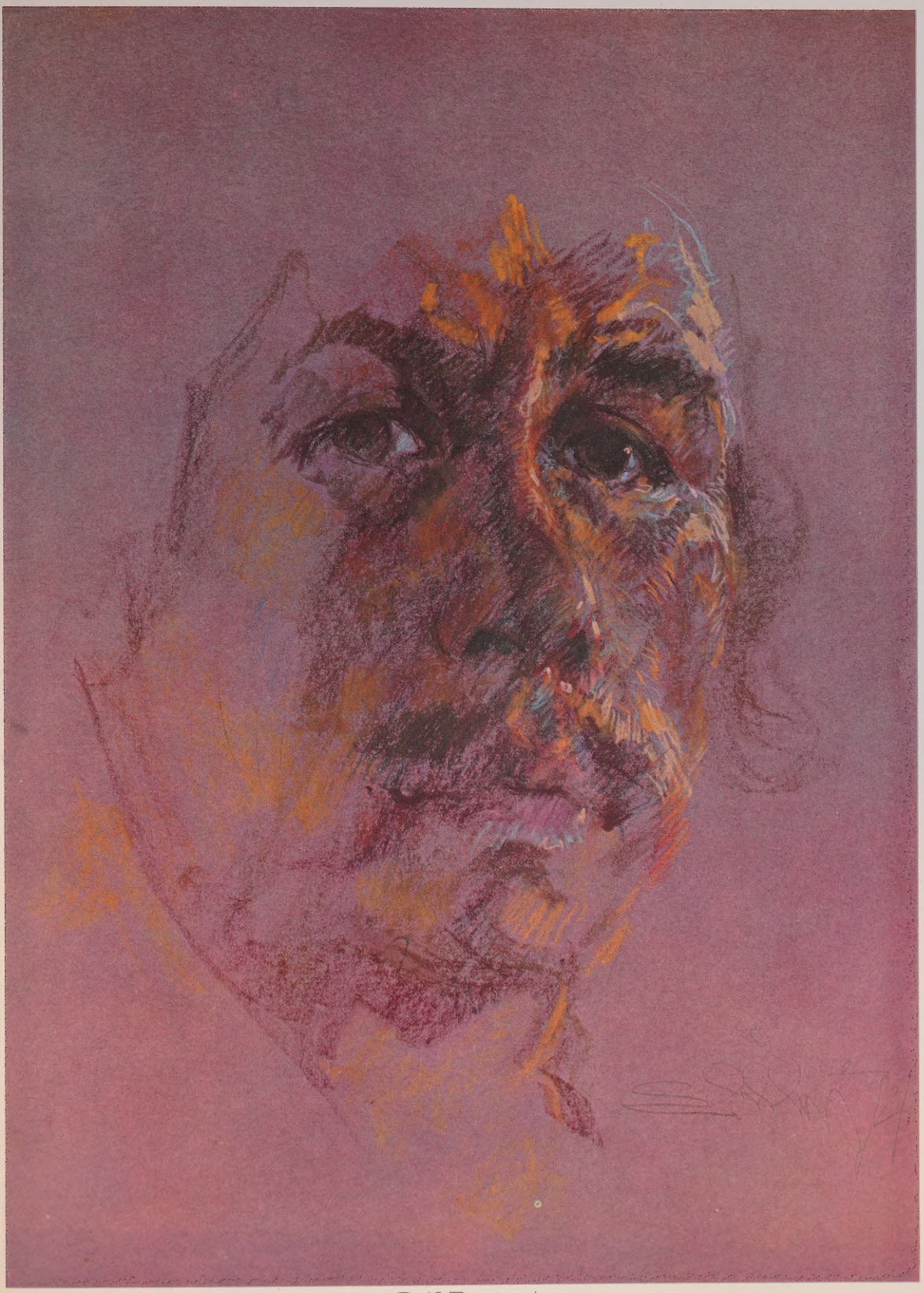
The foregoing brief summaries of birth, tribal association, education and exhibitions fail to convey a picture of the real life of the native artist, of his hardships, struggles and his search for a place within a social and value structure which is fundamentally different from that evolved during the millenia which preceded contact with European civilization and power. Chief Dan George (quoted from "Tawow", Spring 1971) shall have the last word in this Biographical Section. "... I was born a thousand years ago, born in a culture of bows and arrows. But within the span of half a lifetime, I was flung across the ages to the culture of the atom bomb. And that is a flight far beyond a flight to the moon." "The Indians of the generation before me felt they were losing their way of life. They felt lonesome for the freedom they once had. They realized they had to turn to a different culture in order to survive." "Our flower has withered for awhile, but now it will grow not into one flower but into bouquets of Indian culture and talent."



Eagle
Martin Panamick

Shaking Tent
Joshim Kagegamic

Loneliness and Desire
Sam Ash



Self Portrait
Arthur Shilling

Spring Awakening
Carl Ray

Devil Woman
Blake Debassige

LITHOGRAPHED IN CANADA
TOLLEFSON LITHO